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Alaska Department of Fish and Game

NEWS

Monday, February 14, 2005

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Muskox Season To Open February 16, 2005

The Alaska Department of Fish and Game will open a registration permit hunting season for muskox in Unit 26B on February 16, 2005.

The hunt includes the area east of the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area and the Prudhoe Bay Closed Area, and west of the Canning River. Permits are available only to Alaska residents, and may be obtained at Nuiqsut and Kaktovik. The season will be closed when four animals are taken or by March 31, whichever comes first.

The season is designed to provide a meat hunt more than trophy opportunity. In fact, the regulation requires that half of the horns and the muzzle be cut off and the horn tips and muzzle be surrendered to ADF&G in Fairbanks within three days of the kill if the hunter removes the muskox from Unit 26. In addition, no aircraft may be used to transport hunters, hunting gear or harvested muskoxen. Also, remember that many hunters cannot access the hunt area using a motorized vehicle (e.g. snowmachine), because they would be traversing through the Dalton Highway Corridor Management Area, which does not allow motorized vehicles.

The bag limit for this hunt is one muskox per year. "A hunter who has killed a muskox anywhere in Alaska since July 1, 2004, under either state or federal regulations, is not eligible for a permit," said Assistant Area Biologist Beth Lenart.

The Board of Game authorized ADF&G to open the season when hunting conditions are favorable. "Moderate temperatures, good snow cover and frozen rivers should allow for a good hunt," Lenart stated.

Muskox disappeared from mainland Alaska in the mid- to late-1800s, but were reintroduced to Nunivak Island in 1935-36. In 1969 & 1970, animals from Nunivak were translocated to other parts of Alaska. Approximately 250–300 muskoxen inhabit Unit 26B.

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